

Almira Township

Regular Board Meeting Minutes

July 8, 2024

I. Supervisor Roper called the meeting to order at 6 pm at the Almira Township Hall 19639 Maple Street, Lake Ann

II. Pledge to the Flag Recited

III. Roll Call

Present: Tammy Clous, Mandy Gray Rineer, Mark Roper, Lori Florip, Matt Therrien

IV. **Additions/Deletions to Meeting Agenda:** Under Guests add Item B. Pearl Lake: Mary Beth Haas. Move Brief Public Input to appear after Guests on all future agendas.

V. **Approval of Meeting Agenda:** *Motion by Therrien*, supported by Clous, to approve the meeting agenda as amended for this meeting and on all future agendas. All ayes, no nays, motion passed.

VI. Approval of Consent Agenda

Motion by Rineer, supported by Therrien, to approve the consent agenda as presented. All ayes, no nays, motion passed.

VII. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer MG Rineer provided the Financial Report for the end of June 2024. Mandy stated that summer tax bills have been mailed. Contact her if any questions.

IX. County Commissioners

Commissioner Art Jeannot was not in attendance but had furnished a written report that was available for review by the public.

X. Dept. Heads:

Jerry Morse, Recreational Resources Committee member stated that Chris Convissor is the newest member of the Committee. He also stated that the sub-committee's projects were coming along, the dog park fencing has been ordered, the baseball season is coming to an end, Ransom Lake Natural Area will be discussed later in the meeting. Tom Vinette, Chairperson of the Recreational Resources Committee, arrived just as Jerry was finishing his report. Tom asked what Jerry had covered and only added that the Committee had quorums for two months in a row.

Fire Chief Drury reported on call statistics, vehicles and equipment, training, grants, and community outreach.

XI. Guests:

- A. **Ransom Lake Natural Area: Donald Shires:** Don passed out a packet with information which included parts of pages from the Ransom Lake Natural Area Management Plan, pictures of the wetlands, proposed temporary trail impact language for twelve (12) signs, map of area for proposed trail impact sign placements, pictures of where the proposed trail impact signs should be placed, and a picture of damage to the Bellows Creek bridge. Don stated that a survey was done this spring and that about 300 visitors a

week used this natural area. Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy could make up the proposed temporary trail impact signs for about \$400.00 and residents would be willing to help defray the costs of the twelve (12) proposed signs. What the group is asking for is approval of the proposed trail impact language for twelve (12) signs to be done by GTRLC, to close the trail going through the wetlands, and to close the bridge over Bellows Creek with cones or saw horses. Barbara Shires stated that she thought that saw horses to close the bridge is the best idea but a lesser action would be acceptable. Chris, from GTRLC along with an official from EGLE met with township officials and members of this group at Ransom Lake Natural Area a few weeks ago and there was no requirement to close the area. Amy Carmien stated that EGLE mentioned moving the trail and bridge.

- B. Pearl Lake: Mary Beth Haas:** Mary Beth Haas informed the Board that PLM had found Eurasian watermilfoil in Pearl Lake after doing their annual testing. Duane Redick, President of one of the Pearl Lake Home Owners Associations asked for funds to help treat the Eurasian watermilfoil with the suggested chemicals recommended by PLM. PLM says the treatment would cost about \$2,080 if caught and treated early. Redick and Haas need to get permission for treatment and the actual cost and bring this information back to the Board. If the Association gets the permission and cost and wants to foot the entire bill up front, then the Board might consider helping with treatment costs.

VIII. Brief Public Input: Barbara Shires asked about the ARPA funds versus grant request in regards to Ransom Lake Natural Area, as it appeared in the Summer Township Newsletter.

XII. Old Business:

- A. ARPA Projects:** Roper reported that the town hall steps are being worked on currently, and that the two new flush toilets at the park are being constructed. Florip reported that the fence for the dog park has been ordered and waiting for the installation date. Therrien reported still looking for a person that does plaster work.
- B. Social Security and Pension:** Clous reported that the paper work to change investment firms is being filled out for the pension plan.
- C. Recreational Plan:** No update at this time.
- D. Ransom Lake Grant:** Roper reported that September of this year is when notice would be given if any additional information was needed for the grant application, and that December of this year is when notice is given if grant application was approved. Roper stated that even if the grant was not approved, a new bridge would be installed over Bellows Creek.
- E. Red Door Lease:** Rineer presented an updated lease agreement. *Motion by Clous*, supported by Florip, to approve the amended lease agreement with Red Door. Roll call vote was as follows: Therrien, aye; Florip, aye; Clous, aye; Rineer, aye; Roper, aye; all ayes, no nays, motion passed.

- F. Park Paving:** Roper presented two bids for paving work at the park, one from Ron Brown and Sons, Inc. and one from Team Elmers. Discussion took place. A third bid is needed so Roper will try to get the third bid.
- G. Townhall Paving:** Now that the townhall steps are being done the paving in front of the townhall can get done. Discussion took place. *Motion by* Therrien, supported by Rineer; to have Molon Asphalt, Inc. pave the area in front of the townhall not to exceed \$5,000.00. Roll call vote was as follows: Clous, aye; Rineer, aye; Florip, aye; Therrien, aye; Roper, aye. All ayes, no nays, motion passed.
- H. Ransom Lake Natural Area:** Roper stated that he figured ten (10) temporary trail impact signs versus the twelve (12) proposed signs would be enough. Therrien stated that he has not seen any degradation since the beaver dam flooding, this is the wettest spring/summer and is not ideal for the trail, he is not in favor of closing the trail. Florip stated that she has not been out there. Clous stated that she had heard that the wetlands would take a couple of weeks to rehabilitate but that would not start until the new bridge location could be installed. She also stated that the Township had already put-up signs to tread lightly in the wetlands area. Therrien stated that the wetland area would normally be dried up by now if not for so much rain, this is a temporary situation, not ideal for closing in his opinion. Clous stated that the information from EGLE did not state that this area needed to be closed, only to be sure to get a permit before putting in any new construction. Roper stated that the wetlands were there when the bridge and boardwalk was originally put in with permits allowed by the DNR and GTRLC. He is reluctant to close the bridge but is willing to put up signs. Clous again stated that the Township already had made and installed signs. Rineer stated that the Township has done enough, put up laminated signs, feels disrespected. Florip stated that the boards on the bridge do need to be replaced. *Motion by* Rineer, supported by Florip, to purchase plastic signs with the wording that is already on the signs the Township made and install these signs only where the current signs are located. Discussion took place. Rineer agreed to amend her motion to purchase plastic signs with the wording that is already on the signs the Township made and install these signs only where the current signs are located until a new bridge is done, then these signs will be removed. Florip agreed to support the amended motion. Roll call vote was as follows: Florip, aye; Rineer, aye; Therrien, aye; Clous, aye; Roper, nay, four (4) ayes, one (1) nay, motion passed.

XIII. New Business

- A. Ragnar:** Application for special event from Ragnar Events, LLC was reviewed and discussed. *Motion by* Rineer, supported by Therrien, to approve the Special Event Application from Ragnar Events, LLC as submitted. All ayes, no nays, motion passed.
- B. Dunesville:** Application for special event from Dunesville 2024 was reviewed and discussed. *Motion by* Clous, supported by Rineer, to approve the Special Event Application from Dunesville 2024 as submitted. All ayes, no nays, motion passed.
- C. Fee Schedule:** Zoning Administrator Preston requested some changes in the fee schedule that she had sent to the Board. Discussion took place about what changes had

been made. *Motion by Rineer*, supported by Florip, to accept and approve the fee schedule as amended. All ayes, no nays, motion passed.

- D. Election Items:** Clous presented the recommendation from the Township Election Commission regarding Election inspectors for Election Day, Early Voting, Absent Voter Counting Board, and Receiving Board, including meal allowance up to \$500 to purchase two meals for the inspectors working election day. Discussion took place. *Motion by Clous*, supported by Therrien, to approve all Election Inspectors and the meal allowance as recommended by the Township Election Commission. All ayes, no nays, motion passed.

XIV. Extended Public Input: Sue Jennings stated that she has written several letters over the years regarding the Ransom Lake Natural Area including concerns about the wetland area(s). Sue has worked for the National Park Service and stated that people will start building side trails, especially during wet seasons and she wants the wetland area protected. Ben Deemer asked about any updates on road upgrades in the Township. Chase Pasicznyk, from Honor Bank, said he hoped to see everyone at this weekend's homecoming event. Chase also stated that at least fourteen (14) check frauds have come into the bank over the last couple of weeks. Stop by the bank to get more information on how to avoid fraud. Jerry Morse stated that he has been a member of the Township's Recreational Resources Committee for six (6) years. He knows that the Committee is an advisory committee to the Township Board. He stated that the Ransom Lake Natural Area has been reviewed by this Committee over the years. He thanked the Board for the two-way communications. He cautions the Board to not close the bridge as this would create even more side trails as mentioned by Sue previously. He encouraged continued talks and to consider consolidating some trails.

XV. Board Comments: Therrien stated that long time Ransom Lake Natural Area advocate/volunteer Earl Clark passed away on June 27th. Earl would help with trail clean up along with his many hours of fund-raising efforts. Earl also volunteered hours helping with the Music in the Park event. Florip informed all that the Celebration of Life for her son Erik is this Saturday. The bench at the Veterans Memorial Area in the Township Park is done, her family feels the amazing community support. Rineer also mentioned all the volunteer hours that Earl Clark had put in for the Township along with his annual bird house building with the elementary school kids over the years. The LA 5 K was wonderful. Summer property taxes are due September 16th. Clous stated that Absent Voter ballots have been mailed, some coming back in already. In person early voting starts on July 27th and ends on August 4th. Roper stated that the community is always willing to help each other, can't compare that to anything. Earl's service will be held at the Lake Ann United Methodist Church this Friday, visitation starting at 10 a.m. and service at 11 a.m. Earl was always willing to help.

XVI. Adjourn: Supervisor adjourned the meeting at 7:37 p.m.